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CAPTAIN SCHLOTTERWERZ



"What You Jabber, You Stabber?" He Shouted. "Get Back and Try Some More How Long You Can Fool the People!"

MISS BERTHA HITZEL, of Cincinnati, reached the age of twenty-two upon the eleventh of May, 1915; and it was upon the afternoon of her birthday that for the first time in her life she saw her father pace the floor. Never before had she seen any agitation of his expressed so vividly; on the contrary, until the preceding year she had seldom known him to express emotion at all, and in her youthfulness she had sometimes doubted his capacity for much feeling. She could recall no hour of family stress that had caused him to weep, to become gesticulative or to lift his voice unusually. Even at the time of her mother's death he had been quiet to the degree of apparent lethargy.

Characteristically a silent man, he was almost notorious for his silence. Everybody in Cincinnati knew old Fred Hitzel; at least there was a time when all the older business men either knew him or knew who he was. "Sleepy old Dutchman," they said of him tolerantly, meaning that he was a sleepy old German. "Funny old man," they said. "Never says anything he doesn't just plain had to—but he says word, just the same! Put away a good many dollars before he quit the wholesale-grocery business—must be worth seven or eight hundred thousand, maybe a million. Always minded his own business, and square as a dollar. You'd think he was stingy, he's so close with his talk; but he isn't. Any good charity can get all it wants out of old Fred, and he's always right there with a subscription for any public movement. A mighty good hearted old Dutchman he is; and a mighty good citizen too. Wish we had a lot more just like him!"

His daughter was his only child and they had a queer companionship. He had no children by his first wife; Bertha was by his second, whom he married when he was fifty-one; and the second Mrs. Hitzel died during the daughter's fourteenth year, just as Bertha was beginning to develop into that kind of blond charmfulness which shows forth both delicate and robust; a high-colored daisied whose color could always become instantly still higher. Her tendency was to be lively; and her father humored her sprightliness as she grew up by keeping out of the way so artfully that to her friends who came to the house he seemed to be merely a mythical propriety of Bertha's.

By Booth Tarkington

ILLUSTRATED BY HARVEY DUNN

But father and daughter were nevertheless closely sympathetic and devoted, and the daughter found nothing indifferent to herself in his habitual seeming to be a man half asleep. He

would sit all of an evening, his long upper eyelids drooping so far that only a diamond chip of lamplight reflection beneath them showed that his eyes were really open—for him—and he would puff at the cigar, protruding between his moustache and his shovel beard, not more than twice in a quarter of an hour, yet never letting the light go out completely; and all the while he would speak not a word, though Bertha chattered gayly to him or read the newspaper aloud. Sometimes, at long intervals, he might make a faint hiding sound for comment or, when the news of the day was stirring, as at election times, he might grunt a little, not ungenerally. Bertha would be pleased then to think that her reading had brought him to such a pitch of vociferation.

The change in old Fred Hitzel began to be apparent early in August, 1914; and its first symptoms surprised his daughter rather pleasantly; next, she was astonished without the pleasure; then she became troubled and increasingly apprehensive.

He came home from his German club on the afternoon when it was known that the last of the forts at Liège had fallen and he dragged a chair to an open window, where he established himself, perspiring and breathing heavily under his fat. But Bertha came and closed the window.

"You'll catch cold, papa," she said. "Your face is all red in spots, and you better cool off with a fan before you sit in a draft. Here!" And she placed a palm-leaf fan in his hand. "You oughtn't to have walked home in the sun."

"I didn't walk," said Mr. Hitzel. "It was a trolley. You hurt some none!"

She nodded. "I bought an extra; there're plenty extras these days!" Her father put the fan down upon his lap and rubbed his hands; he was in great spirits. "Dose big guns!" he said. "By Cheesmy, dose big guns make a hole big as a couple houses! Radoom! Nutting in the world can stop dose big guns of the German Army. Radoom! She goes off. She's got to fall down! By Cheesmy, I would like to hear dose big guns once yet!"



Bertha gave a little cry of protest and pretended to stop her ears. "I wouldn't! I don't care to be deaf for life, thank you! I don't think you really would, either, papa." She laughed. "You didn't take an extra glass of Rhine wine down at the club, did you, papa?"

"One glass," he said. "As usual. Always one glass. Takes me one hour. Chust. Why?"

"Because"—she laughed again—"it just seemed to me I never saw you so excited."

"Excited?"

"It must be hearing about those big German guns, I guess. Look! You're all flushed up, and don't cool off at all."

Old Fred's flush deepened, in fact; and his drooping eyelids twitched as with the effort to contain loss of his vision. "Listen, Berta," he said. "Putty soon, when the war gets finished, we should go to New York and hop on dat big Vaterland steamship and git off in Antwerp; maybe Calais. We rent us a otomobile and go visit all dose battleviets in Belchum; we go to Liège—all o'er—and we look and see for ourselves what dose fine big guns of the Cherman Army done. I want to see dose big holes. I want to see it most in the world. *Radoom!* Such a—such a power!"

"Well, I declare!" his daughter cried.

"What for?"

"I declare, I don't think I ever heard you talk so much before in my whole life!"

Old Fred chuckled. "*Radoom!*" he said. "I guess dat's some talkin', ain't it? Dose big guns knows how to talk! *Radoom!* Hoopet!"

And this talkativeness of his, though coming so late in his life, proved to be not a mood but a vein. Almost every day he talked, and usually a little more than he had talked the day before—but not always with so much gusto as he had displayed concerning the great guns that reduced Liège. One afternoon he was indignant when Bertha quoted friends of hers who said that the German Army had no rightful business in Belgium.

"Eng-lish lovers!" he said. "Look at a map once, what tells you in miles. It ain't no longer across Belchum from dat French Frontier to Chermany except about from here to Dayton. How can Chermany take such a chance once, and leaf such a place all open? Subboose dey done it: Eng-lish Army and French Army can easy walk straight to Aix and Easen, and Chermany could git her heart stab, like in two minutes! Ask-o! Cherman Army knows too much for such a foolishness. What for you want to listen to talkings from Chonny Bulls?"

"No; they weren't English lovers, papa," Bertha said. "They were Americans, just as much as I am. It was over at the Thompson girls', and there were some other people there too. They were all talking the same way, and I could hardly stand it; but I didn't know what to say."

"What to say!" he echoed. "I guess you could called 'em a pile o' Chonny Bulls, couldn't you once? Stickin' up for Queen Victoria and turn-up punta legs because it's raining in London!"

"No," she said, thoughtful and troubled. "I don't think they care anything particularly about the English, papa. At least, they didn't seem to."

"So? Well, what for they got to go talkin' so big on the Eng-lish site, please answer once!"

Bertha faltered. "Well, it was—most of it was about Louvain."

"Louvain! I hear you!" he said. "Listen, Berta! Who had you got in Chermany?"

She did not understand. "You mean what do I know about Germany?"

"No!" he answered emphatically. "You don't know nothing about Chermany. You can't speak it, den; not so good as six years old you could once. I mean: Who belongs to you in Chermany? I mean relations. Name of 'em is all you know: Ludwig, Gustave, Albrecht, Karc. But your cousins chust de same—first cousins—my own sister Minna's boys. Well, you seen her letters; you know what kind of children she's got. Fine boys! Our own birt—closest kin we got. People same as the best finest young men here in Cincinnati. Well, Albert and Gustave and Karc is efer one in the Cherman Army, and Louis is officer, Cherman Navy. My own nephews ain't it? Well, we don't know where each one keeps now, yet; maybe fightin' dose Russiabens; maybe marchin' into Paris; maybe some of 'em is at Louvain!"

"Subboose it was Louvain—subboose Gustave or Karc is one of dose Chermans of Louvain. You subboose one of dose boys do somethin' wrong? No! If he hat to shoot and burn, it's because he hat to, ain't it? Well, whatever Chermans was at Louvain, they are the same good boys as Minna's boys, ain't it? You hear Chonny Bull site of it, I tell you. You bedder wait and git your nose from Chermany, Berta. From Chermany we git what is honest. From Chonny Bull all lies!"

But Bertha's trouble was not altogether alleviated. "People talk just dreadfully," she sighed. "Sometimes—why, sometimes you'd think, to hear them, it was almost a disgrace to be a German!"

"Keeb owt from 'em!" her father returned testily. "Quit goin' near 'em. Me! I make no attention!"

Yet as the days went by he did make some attention. The criticisms of Germany that he heard indignantly repented at his club worried him so much that he talked about them at considerable length after he got home; and there were times, as Bertha read the Enquirer to him, when he would angrily bid her throw the paper away. Finally he stopped his subscription and got his news entirely from a paper printed in the German language. Nevertheless he could not choose but hear and see a great deal that displeased and irritated him. There were a few members of his club—citizens of German descent—who sometimes expressed uneasiness concerning the right of Germany to be in Belgium; others repeated what was said about town and in various editorials about the Germans; and Bertha not infrequently was so distressed by what she heard among her friends that she appealed to him for substantiation of defenses she had made.

"Why, papa, you'd think I'd said something wrong!" she told him one evening. "And sometimes I almost got to thinking that they don't like me any more. Mary Thompson said she thought I ought to be in jail, just because I said the Kaiser always tried to do whatever he thought was right."

Hitzel nodded. "Anyway, while Chermany is at war I guess we stick up for him. Kaisers I don't care; my fatter was a strong Kaiser hater, and so am I. Nobody hates Kaisers worse—until the big war came. I don't want no Kaisers nor Jennifers—I am putty strong radical, Berta—but the Kaiser, he's right for once yet, anyhow. Subboose he didn't make no war when Chermany was attackt; Chermany would be swallowed straight up by Cossacks and French. For once he's right, yes. You subboose the Cherman people let him sit in his house and say nutting while Cossacks and French chassours go killing people all o'er Chermany? If Chermany is attackt, Kaiser's got to declare war; Kaiser's got to fight, don't he?"

"Mary Thompson said it was Germany that did the attacking, papa. She said the Kaiser —"

But her father interrupted her with a short and sour laugh. "Fawty years peace," he said. "Fawty years peace in Europe! Cherman people is peaceful people more as any people—but you got to let 'em lift! Kaiser's got to more to do makin' war as anybody else in Chermany. You keep away from dose Mary Thompsons!"

But keeping away from the Mary Thompsons was little; Bertha was not an ostrich, and if she had been one closing eyes and ears could not have kept her from the consciousness of what distressed her. The growing and intensifying disapproval of Germany was like a thickening of the very air, and the pressure of it grew heavier upon both daughter and father, so that old Hitzel began to lose flesh a little and Bertha worried about him. And when, upon the afternoon of her birthday—the eleventh of May, 1915—he actually paced the floor, she was frightened.

"But, papa, you mustn't let yourself get so excited!" she begged him. "Let's quit talking about all this killing and killing and killing. Oh, I get so tired of thinking about fighting! I want to think about this lovely wrist watch you gave me for my birthday. Come on; let's talk about that, and don't get so excited!"

"Don't git so excited!" he mocked her bitterly. "Nat Chust sit down and smoke, and drink dose Rhine wine, maybe! Who's goin' to stop eckin' some excited, I guess not, after I listen by Otto Schultze sit in a clob and squeal he's scairt to say how gied he is Lusitania got blowed up, because it would be goin' to incher his bisseness! He wants whole clob to eekt a hippisierit; p'tent we don't feel no gladness about blowin' up Lusitania!"

"I'm not glad, papa," Bertha said. "It may be wrong, but I can't be. All those poor people in the water —"

"Chonny Bulls!" he cried. "Sittin' on a million bullets for killin' Cherman solshers! Chonny Bulls!"

"Oh, no! That's the worst of it! There were over a hundred Americans, papa."

"Americans!" he bitterly jibed. "You call dose people Americans? Chonny Bulls, I tell you; Chonny Bulls and Eng-lish lovers! Where was it Lusitania is goin' at? Eng-land! What bisseness Americans get in Eng-land? On a ship fit up to his neck all gunpowder and bullets to kill Chermans! Well, it seems to me if it's any American bisseness to cuss Chermans because Chermans blow up such a murder ship I must be goin' gracy! Look here once, Berta! Your own cousin Louis—ain't he in the Cherman Navy? He's a submarine officer, I don't know. Subboose he should be, maybe he's the feller blow up Lusitania! You tink it should be Louis who does somethin' wrong? He's a mudderer if it's him, yes? I guess not!"

"Whoever it was, of course he only obeyed orders," Bertha said gloomily.

"Well, whoever git him dose orders," Hitzel cried, "ain't he got right? By golly, I belief United States is all gray except people descendt from Chermans. Chust listen to 'em! Look at belines in nocepapers; look at balletin boards! A feller can't go nowhere; he can't git away from it. 'Damn Chermans!' 'Damn Chermans!' 'Damn Chermans!' You can't git away from it nowhere! 'Chermans is mudderers!' 'Chermans kills kettlesbebbles!' 'Chermans kills womans!' 'Chermans codify humanity!' Nowhere you go you git away from all such Eng-lish lies! People chance faces when they heppen to look at you, because maybe you got a Cherman-lookin' face! Berta, I goes to love my country, but by Gott I feel sometimes we can't stay here no longer! It's too much!"

She had begun to weep a little. "Papa, let's do talk about something else! Can't we talk about something else?"

He paid no attention, but continued to waddle up and down the room at the best pace of which he was capable. "It's too much!" he said, over and over.

The long "crisis" that followed the Lusitania's anguished atated Mr. Hitzel's agitations not at all; and having learned how to pace a floor he paced it more than once. He paced that floor whenever the newspapers

gave evidence of one of those recurrent outbursts of American anger and disgust caused by the Germans' use of poison gas and liquid fire or by Zeppelin murders of noncombatants. He paced it after the Germans in Belgium killed Edith Cavell; and he paced it when the Bryce reports were published; and when the accounts of the deportations into slavery were confessed by the Germans to be true; and he paced it when the Arabic was torpedoed; he walked more than two hours on the day when the President's first Sussex note was published.

"Now," he demanded of Bertha, "you tell me what your Mary Thompsons says now! Mary Thompsons want Wilson to git in a war, pickin' on Chermany alvies! You ask 'em: What your Mary Thompsons says the United States should make a war because bullet factories don't git quick-erick enough, is it? What she says?"

"I don't see her any more," Bertha told him, her sensitive color deepening. "For one thing — Well, I guess you heard about Francis; that's Mary's brother."



"I Know I'll Go Crazy the First Time I See a Turanul!"

Mr. Hitzel frowned. "Francis? It's the tall fellow our hired girls says they always hat to be letting in the front door? Sendin' all so much flowers and tea-and-bers? Him?"

Bertha had grown pink indeed. "Yes," she said. "I don't see any of that crowd any more, papa, except just to speak to on the street sometimes; and we just barely speak at that. I couldn't go to their houses and listen to what they said—or else they'd all stop what they had been saying whenever I came round. I couldn't stand it. Francis—Mary's brother that we just spoke of—he's gone to France, driving an ambulance. It kind of seems to me now as if probably they never, any of that crowd, did like me—not much, anyway; I guess maybe just because I was from Germany."

"Hah!" Old Fred uttered a loud and bitter exclamation. "Yes; now you see it! Ain't it so? Whoever is from Germany now is hat people, all dose Mary Thompsons says. You be to comicks people, Chermans. Look in all old comicks papers—alwies you see Chermans is jekkeses! Dummhats! Cherman fools was the choise part in funny shows! Alwies make fun of Chermans; make fun of how Chermans speak English longwidd; make fun of Cherman lengwittch; make fun of Cherman face and body; Chermans ain't got no manners; ain't got no sense; ain't got nutting but stomacks! Alwies the Chermans was nutting in this country but to laugh at 'em! Why should it be, if ain't because they chest oberpise us? By Gott, they say, Chermans is clowns! Clowns; it's what they you to call us! Now we are nudderses! It's too much, I tell you! It's too much! I am goin' to git out of the country. It's too much! It's too much! It's too much!"

"I guess you're right," Bertha said with quiet bitterness. "I never thought about it before the war, but it does look now as though they never liked anybody that was from Germany. I used to think they did—until the war; and they still do seem to like some people with German names and that take the English side. That crowd I went with, they always seemed to think the English and French side was the American side. Well, I don't care what they think."

"Look here, Baita," said old Fred sharply. "You listen! When Mitater Francis Thompsons gits home again from French em'ulances, you don't allow him in our house, you be careful. He don't gits to come here no more, you listen!"

"No," she said. "You needn't be afraid about that, papa. We got into an argument, and he was through coming long before he left, anyway."

"Well, he won't git no chance to argue at you when he gits back," said her father. "I reckon we ain't in the U. S. party soon. It's too much!"

Bertha was not troubled by his talk of departure from the country; she heard it too often to believe in it, and she told Kyaline, their slurry cook—who sometimes overheard things and grew nervous about her place—that this threat of Mr. Hitzel's was just letting off steam. Bertha was entirely unable to imagine her father out of Cincinnati.

But in March of 1917 he became so definite in preparation as to have two excellent new trunks sent to the house; also he placed before Bertha the results of some correspondence which he had been conducting; whereupon Bertha, excited and distressed, went to consult her mother's cousin, Robert König, in the "office" of his prosperous "Hardware Products Corporation."

"Well, Bertha, it's like this way with me," said Mr. König. "I am for Germany when it's a case of England fighting against Germany, and I wish our country would keep out of it. But it don't look like that way now; I think we are going sure to fight Germany. And when it comes to that I ain't no no German side, you bet! My two boys, they'll enlist the first day it's declared, both of 'em; and if the United States Government wants me to go, too, I'll say 'Yes' quick. But your papa, now, it's different. After never saying anything at all for seventy-odd years, he's got started to be a talker, and he's talked pretty loud, and I wouldn't be surprised if he couldn't know how to keep his mouth shut any more. He talks too much, these days. Of course all his talk don't amount to so much hot air, and it wouldn't ever get two cents' worth of influence, but people maybe wouldn't think about that. It might be ugly times ahead, and he could easy get into trouble. After all, I wouldn't worry, Bertha; it's nice in the wintertime to take a trip south."

"Take a trip south?" Bertha echoed. "Florida, yes! But Mexico—it's horrible!"

"Oh, well, not all Mexico, probably," her cousin said consolingly. "He wouldn't take you where it's in a bad condition. Where does he want to go?"

"It's a little place, he says. I never heard of it; it's called Lupo, and he's been writing to a Mr. Helmholz that keeps the hotel there and says everything's fine, he's got rooms for us; and we should come down there."

"Helmholz," Mr. König repeated. "Yes; that should be Jake Helmholz that lived here once when he was a young man; he went to Mexico. He was Hilda's nephew—your papa's first wife's nephew, Bertha."

"Yes, that's who it is, papa said."

Mr. König became reassuring. "Oh, well, then, you see, I expect you'll find everything nice then, down there. Bertha. You'll be among relatives—almost the same—if your papa's fixed it up to go and stay at a hotel Jake Helmholz runs. I guess I shouldn't make any more objections if it's goin' to be like that, Bertha. You won't be near any revolutions, and I expect it'll be a good thing for your papa. He's too excited. Down there he can ease Wilson as much as he pleases. Let him go and get it out of his system; he better cool off a little."

Bertha happened to remember the form of this final bit of advice a month later as she unpacked her trunk in Jacob Helmholz's hotel in Lupo; and she laughed ruefully. Lupo, physically, was no place wherein to cool off in mid-April. The squat town, seen through the square windows of her room, layward in a white heat. Over the top of a long chalky wall she could see a mile's cars slowly ambulating in a fog of bluish dust, and she made out a great peaked hat accompanying those cars through the dust; but nothing else above seemed to move in the Lupoian world except an unseen roaster's throat which, as if wound up by the heat, sent at almost symmetrical intervals a long cock-a-doodle into the still furnace of the air; the hottest sound, Bertha thought, that she had ever heard—hotter even than the sound of August locusts in Cincinnati trees.

She found the exertion of unpacking difficult, yet did not regret that she had declined the help of a chambermaid. "I'm sure she's an Indian!" she explained to her father. "It scared me just to look at her, and I wouldn't be able to stand an Indian waiting on me—never!"

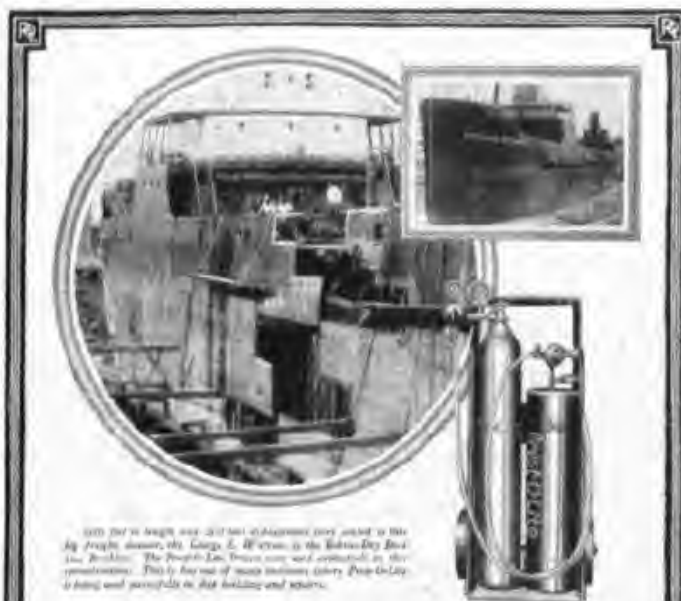
He laughed and told her she must get used to the customs of the place. "Besides," he said, "it ain't so much we might see a couple Indians around the house, maybe; it don't interfere, not so's a person got to notice. What makes me notice, it's how Jake Helmholz has got putty near a Cherman hotel out here so far away. It beats efer-ting! Plener on her! From an ice plant like a little steamship's got. Cherman motels downstairs on walls: *Wer held mich Wais, Wat und* — He's got a lot of 'em! He hies us dining dinner in a putty garden he's got. It's maybe hot now, but hinky she cools off fine. Jake, he says we'd be supplied; got to sleep under blankets after dark; she cools off so fine!"

Old Fred was more cheerful than his daughter had known him to be for a long, long time; and though her

(Continued on Page 68)



"Kasson! I Don't Care! My Pooter Was a Shining Ketter Hater, and So am I. Nobody Hates Kasson Wagon—Until the Big War Comes!"



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CAPTAIN SCHLOTTERWERZ

(Continued from Page 6.)

throid heart was oppressed by the strange place and by strange thoughts concerning it, she felt a moment's gladness that they had come.

"Jake Helmholtz is a cholly feller," Mr. Hitzel went on, chuckling. "He gets along good down here. Says Villa ain't never come in hundred and fifty miles. He ain't afraid of Villa, neither. He seen him once; he shook hands nice, he said. Dinnertime, Jake Helmholtz he's got a fine supper to show us, he says."

"You mean something he's having cooked for us for dinner as a surprise, papa?" "No; he gets us a German dinner, he says, but it ain't a sup'ice to eat. He says 'You chast wait,' he says to me. 'You'll get a sup'ice for dinner. It's goin' to be the sup'ice of your life,' he says; 'but it ain't nothin' to eat,' he says. 'It's goin' to be a sup'ice for Miss Bairra, too,' Jake says. 'Sae'll like it nice, too,' he says."

But Bertha did not care for surprises; she looked anxious. "I wish he wouldn't have a surprise for us," she said. "I'm afraid of finding one every minute anyhow, in the washbowl or somewhere. I know I'll go crazy the first time I see a tarantula!" "Oh, it ain't goin' to be no lug," her father assured her. "Jake says it's too fine a climate for much bugs; he ain't never worry none about lugs. He says it's a sup'ice we like so much it tickles us putty zent dead!"

Bertha frowned involuntarily, wishing that her father had not used the word dead just then; she felt Mexican ominous round her, and even that intermittent cockerow failed to reassure her as a homely and familiar sound. Mexico itself was surprising enough for her; even the appearance of her semirelative, the landlord Helmholtz, had been a surprise to her, and she wished that he had not prepared anything additional. Her definite fear was that his idea might prove to be something barbaric and improper in the way of native dances; and she had a bad afternoon, not needing to go outside of her room to find it. But a little while after the sharp sunset the husk-colored chambermaid brought in a lamp, and Mr. Hitzel followed, shooting wheezyly. He had discovered the surprise.

"Hoopee!" he cried. "Come look! Bairra, come down! It's here! Come down, see who!" He seized her wrist, hauling her with him, Bertha timorous and reluctant. "Come look! It's here, settin' at our dinner table; it's all fixed in the garden waitin'. Hoopee! Hoopee!"

And having thus partly urged and partly led her down the stairs he halted her in the trellised entrance of Mr. Helmholtz' inconspicuous garden, a walled inclosure with a roof of black night. Half a dozen oil lamps left indeterminate yet definitely unfamiliar the shapings of foliage, screwed in gargyle shadows against the patched stucco walls; but one of the lamps stood upon a small table which had been set for three people to dine, and the light twinkled there reassuringly enough upon commonplace metal and china, and glossed amber streaks brightly up and down slender long bottles. It made too—not quite so reassuringly—a Rembrandt sketch of the two men who stood waiting there—little, rugged-faced, burnt-dry Helmholtz, and a bigger young man in brown linen clothes with a starchy figure under them. His face was large, yet made of shining and ruddy features rather small than large; he was ample yet compact; buxily yet tightly muscular everywhere, suggesting nothing whatever of trace, nevertheless leaving to a stranger's first glance no possibility to doubt his capacity for immense activity and resistance. Most of all he produced an impression of the stiffest sort of thickness; thickness seemed to be profoundly his great power. This strong young man was Mr. Helmholtz' surprise for Bertha and her father.

The latter could not get over it. "Sup'ice!" he cried, laughing loudly in his great pleasure. "I got a sup'ice for you and Miss Bairra," he tells me. "Comes evening dinnertime you get a sup'ice," Jake says. Look, Bertha, what for a sup'ice he makes us! You never seen him before. Guess who it is. It's Louie!"

"Louie?" she repeated vacantly. "Louie Schlottwerz!" her father shouted. "Your own cousin! Minna's Ludwig! Y'f'er see such a fine young feller! It's Louie!"

Vociferating, he pulled her forward; but the new cousin met them halfway and kissed Bertha's hand with an abrupt gallantry altogether master-of-fact with him, but obviously confusing to Bertha. She found nothing better to do than to stare at her hand, thus subdued, and to put it behind her immediately after its release, whereupon there was more hilarity from her father.

"Look!" he cried. "She don't know what to do! She don't see such makers from young fellers in Cincinnati; I should took her to Chermany long ago. Sit down! Sit down! We eat some, drink ches Rhine wine and git acquainted."

"Yes," said Helmholtz. "Eat good. You'll find there's worse places than Mexico to come for German dishes; it'll surprise you. Canned United States soup you git, maybe, but afterwards is Wiener Schnitzel and all else German. And if you got obyeckshuns to the way my waiters look out for you, why, chust hit 'em in the nose once, and send for me!"

He departed as the husk-colored servantess and another like her set soap before his guests. Schlottwerz had not yet spoken distinguishably, though he had murmured over Bertha's hand and laughed heartily with his uncle. But his expression was amiable, and Bertha after glancing at him timidly began: "Do you—" Then blushing even more than before she turned to her father. "Does he—does Cousin Ludwig speak English?"

Mr. Hitzel's high good humor increased all the time, and having bestowed upon his nephew a buffet of approval across the little table—"Speak Eng-dish!" he exclaimed. "Speaks it as good as me and you! He was four years in Eng-land, different times, speaks Eng-dish, French, Mexican—Spanish, you call it, I guess—I heerd him speak it to Jake Helmholtz. Hewet him speak it to Jake Helmholtz. Louie speaks it too fast."

Schlottwerz laughed. "I'm afraid Uncle Fritz is rather vain, Cousin Bertha," he said; and she was astonished to hear no detectable accent in his speech, though she said afterward that his English reminded her more of a Boston professor who had been one of her teachers in school than of anything else she could think of. "Your papa and I had a little talk before dinner, in German," Schlottwerz went on. "At least, we attempted it. Your papa had to stop frequently to think of words he had forgotten, and sometimes he found it necessary to ask me the meaning of an idiom which I introduced into our conversation. He assured me that you spoke German with difficulty, Cousin Bertha; but if you permit me to say it, I think he finds himself more comfortable in the English tongue."

Mr. Hitzel chuckled, not abashed; then he groaned. "No, I ain't! A feller can't remember half what his old English is; yet all the same time he like to speak it, and maybe he gets so he can't speak neither one if he don't look out! Feller can hear plenty Chermans in Cincinnati." His expression clouded with a reminiscence of pain. "Well, I tell you, Louie, I am glad to git away from there. I couldn't stood the U. S. no longer. It's too much! I couldn't swaller it no longer!"

"I should think not," Louie agreed sympathetically. "Many others are like you, Uncle Fritz; they're crossing the frontier every day. That's part of my business here, as I mentioned."

Old Fritz nodded. "Louie tells me he comes here about copper mines," he said to Bertha; "for after-the-war business. Chermans guffent takes him off the heavy a while once, and he's come also to see if Chermans from the U. S. which comes in Mexico could git back home to fight for the old country. Louie's got plenty on his hands. You can see he's a smart feller, Bairra!"

"Yes, papa," she said meekly; but her cousin laughed and changed the subject.

"How are things in your part of the States?" he asked. "Pretty bad?"

"So tough I couldn't stand 'em, ain't I tell you?" Mr. Hitzel responded with sudden vehemence. "It's too much! I tell you I had to hate to walk on the streets my own city! I tell you, the United States is Eng-dish lovers! I don't want to go back in the U. S. long as I can a fella' man! The U. S. hates you if you are from Chermans. It's Louie!"

(Concluded on Page 70.)

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(Continued from Page 68)
Yes, it's not. If the U. S. is going to hate me because I am from Germany, well, by Gosh, I can hate the U. S.!"

Bertha interposed: "Oh, no! Papa, you mustn't say that."

The old man set down the wineglass he was tremendously lifting to his lips and turned to her. "Why? Why? I should say it! Look once: Why did the U. S. commence from the beginning pickin' on Germany? And now why is it war against Germany? Ammunition! So Wall Street don't get soaked for English bonds! So bullet makers keep on gettin' quick-rich. Why don't I hate the U. S. because it kills million Germans from U. S. bullets, when it was against the law all time to send bullets for the English to kill Germans? Ain't it so, Louise?"

But the young man shook his head. He seemed a little amused by his uncle's violent earnestness, and probably he was amused too by the old fellow's interpretation of international law. "No, Uncle Fritz," he said. "I think we may admit—between ourselves at least, and in Mexico—we may admit that the Yankees can hardly be blamed for selling munitions to anybody who can buy them."

Mr. Hitzel sat dumfounded. "You don't blame 'em?" he cried. "You are German officer, and you don't—"

"Not at all," said Schlotterweber. "It's what we should do ourselves under the same circumstances. We always have done so, in fact. Of course we take the opposite point of view diplomatically, but we have no real quarrel with the States upon the matter of munitions. All that is propaganda for the proletariat." He laughed indulgently. "The proletariat takes enormous meals of propaganda; supplying the fodder is a great and expensive industry!"

Mr. Hitzel's expression was that of a person altogether confused; he stared at this cool nephew of his, and said nothing. But Bertha had begun to feel less embarrassed than she had been at first, and she spoke with some assurance.

"What a beautiful thing it would be if nobody at all made bullets," she said. "If there wasn't any ammunition—why, then—"

"Why, then," said the foreign cousin, smiling, "we should again have to fight with clubs and axes."

"Oh, no!" she said quickly. "I mean if there wouldn't be any fighting at all."

He interrupted her, laughing. "When is that state of the universe to arrive?"

"Oh, it could!" she protested earnestly. "The people don't really want to fight each other."

"No; that is so, perhaps," he assented. "Well, then, why couldn't it happen that there wouldn't ever be any more fighting?"

"Because," said Schlotterweber, "because though peoples might not fight, nations always will. Peoples must be kept nations, for one reason, so that they will fight."

"Oh!" Bertha cried. "Yes!" said her cousin emphatically; he had grown serious. "If war dies, progress dies. War is the health of nations."

"You mean war is good?" Bertha said incredulously.

"War is the best good!"

"You mean war when you have to fight to defend your country?"

"I mean war."

She looked at him with wide eyes that comprehended only the simplest matters and comprehended the simplest with the most literal simplicity.

"But the corpses," she said faintly. "Is it good for them?"

"What?" said her cousin, staring now in turn.

Bertha answered him. "War is killing people. Well, if you know where the spirits went—the spirits that were in the corpses that get killed—if you know for certain that they all went to heaven, and war would only be sending them to a good place—why, then perhaps you could say war is good. You can't say it till you are certain that it is good for all the corpses."

"Colossal!" the young officer exclaimed, vaguely annoyed. "Really, I don't know what you're talking about. I'm afraid it sounds like some nonsense you've

caught from Yankoodollarland. We must forget all that now, when you are going to be a good German. Myself, I speak of humanity. War is necessary for the progress of humanity. There can be no advance for humanity unless the most advanced nation leads it. To lead it the most advanced nation must conquer the others. To conquer them it must make war."

"But the Germans!" Bertha cried. "The Germans say they are the most advanced, but they claim they didn't make the war. Papa had letters and letters from Germany, and they all said they were attacked. That's what so much talk was about at home in Cincinnati. Up to the Lusitania the biggest question of all was about which side made the war."

"They all made it," said Schlotterweber. "War was inevitable, and that nation was the cleverest which chose its own time for it and struck first."

Bertha was dumfounded. "But we always—always—" She faltered. "We claimed that the war was forced on Germany by the English."

"It was inevitable," her cousin repeated. "It was coming. These who did not know it were stupid. War is always going to come; and the most advanced nation will always be prepared for it. By such means it will first conquer, then rule all the others. Already we are preparing for the next war. Indeed, we are fighting this one, I may say, with a view to the next, and the peace we make will really be what one now calls 'jockeying for position' for the next war."

"Let us put aside all this talk of 'Who began the war,' and accusations and defenses in journalism and oratory; all this nonsense about international law, which doesn't exist, and all the absurdities about mercy. Nature has no mercy; neither has the upward striving in man. Let us speak like adult people, frankly. We are three blood relations, in perfect sympathy. You have fled from the cowardly hypocrisy of the Yankees, and I am a German officer. Let us look only at the truth. What do we see?"

"That life is war and war is the glory of life, and peace is part of war. In peace we work. It is work behind the lines, and though the guns may be quiet for the time, our frontiers are always our front lines. Look at the network of railways we had built in peace up to the Belgian frontier. We were ready, you see. That is why we are winning. We shall be ready again and win again when the time comes, and again after that. The glorious future belongs all to Germany."

Bertha had not much more than touched the food before her, though she had been hungry when they sat down; and now she stopped eating altogether, letting her hands drop into her lap; where they did not run, however, for her fingers were clenched and unclenched nervously as she listened. Her father continued to eat, but not heartily; he drank more than he ate; he said nothing; and during moments of silence his heavy breathing became audible. The young German was unaware that his talk produced any change in the emotional condition of his new-found relatives; he talked on, eating almost voraciously, himself, but drinking temperately.

He abandoned the great subject for a time, and told them of his mother and brothers, all in war work except Gustave, who, as the Hitzels knew, had been killed at the Somme. Finally, when Cousin Louise had eaten as much as he could be in a cigar taken from an embroidered silk case which he carried, and offered one to his uncle. Old Fred did not lift his eyes; he shook his head and fumbled in one of his waistcoat pockets.

"No," he said in a husky voice. "I smoke my own I brought from Cincinnati."

"As you like," Schlotterweber returned. "Mine come from Havana." He laughed and added, "By secret express!"

"You ain't tell us," Mr. Hitzel said, his voice still husky—"you ain't tell us yet how long you been in Mexico."

"About fourteen months, looking out for the commercial future and doing my share to make the border interesting at the present time for those Yankees you hate so properly, Uncle Fritz."

Hitzel seemed to ruminate feebly. "You know," he said, "you know I didn't hear from Minna since February; she ain't wrote me a letter. Say once, how do the German people feel towards us that is from Germans in the U. S.—the German-Americans?"

His nephew granted, "What would you expect?" he inquired. "You, of course, are exempt; you have left the country in disgust, because you are a true German. But the people at home will never forgive the German-Americans. It is felt that they could have kept America out of this war if they had been really loyal. It was expected of them; but they were cowardly, and they will lose by it when the test comes."

"Test?" did Fred repeated vacantly.

The nephew made a slight gesture with his right hand, to aid him in expressing the obviousness of what he said. "Call it the German test, of the Monroe Doctrine. Freedom of access will give Germany control of the seas, of course. The Panama Canal will be internationalized, and the States will be weakened by their approaching war with Japan, which is inevitable. Then will come the test of the Monroe Doctrine! We have often approached it, but it will be a much better time when England is out of the way and the States have been exhausted by war with Japan."

Bertha interposed: "Would England want to help the United States?"

"Not out of generosity," Schlotterweber laughed. "For her own interest—Canada."

He became jocularly condescending and employed a phrase which Bertha vaguely felt to be somewhat cumbersome and unnatural. "My fair cousin," he said, "listen to some truth, my fair cousin. No nation ever acts with generosity. Every government encourages the proletariat to claim such virtues, but it has never been done and never will be done. See what the Yankees are claiming: They go to war 'to make the world safe for democracy.' One must laugh! They enter the war not for democracy; not to save France nor to save England; not to save international law! Neither to save Wall Street millionaires—though all that is excellent for the proletariat and brings splendid results. No, my fair cousin, the Yankees never did anything generous in their whole history; it isn't in their blood. You are right to hate them, because they are selfish not from a glorious policy, like the great among the Germans, but out of the meanness of their crawling hearts. They went to war with us because they were afraid for their own precious skins, later!"

"I don't believe it!"

Bertha's voice was suddenly sharp and loud, and the timid blush had gone from her cheeks. She was pale, but brighter-eyed than her father had ever seen her—brighter-eyed than anybody had ever seen her. "I don't believe it! We went to war because all that you've been saying has to be fought till it's out of the world; I just now understand. Oh!" she cried, "I just now understand why our American boys went to drive the ambulances in France, but not in Germany!"

Captain Schlotterweber sat amazed, staring at her in an astonishment too great to permit his taking the cigar from his mouth for better ventilation. "We," he echoed. "Now she says 'we'!" His gaze moved to her father. "She is a Yankee, she means. You hear what she says?"

"Yes, I hear her," said his uncle thickly. "Well, what—"

Old Fred Hitzel rose to his feet and with a shaking hand pointed in what he believed to be the direction of the Atlantic Ocean.

"What you subsume, you subsume?" he shouted. "Go back to Germany! Git back to Germany if you got any way to take you! Git back and try some more

how long you can fool the German people till you git 'em to bring you up to a leap post! To-morrow me and Balda starts home again for our own country. It's Cincinnati, you bet you! We hear you! It's too much! It's too much!"

